

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF STATEMENTS CONCERNING
LAW ENFORCEMENT DURING NEWARK RIOTS

Prepared for the Use of the
Newark Human Rights Commission
By the Newark Legal Services Project

A. The Statements: The following analysis is based upon the first 225 statements given to Newark Legal Services Project attorneys, law students or VISTA workers assigned to Newark Legal Services Project. For the most part, the statements were given by apparently law abiding people who had nothing to do with the riots, looting or any other form of lawlessness. They include the owners of small businesses. They include people who have lived in Newark for many years who spent the period of disorder in or about their apartments or going to or from their jobs, families or friends. It is possible that explanations or refutations can be given to some of the 225 statements, but in their totality, they present enough material to require a thorough investigation.

Newark Legal Services Project has taken the statements from the persons giving them and has had them typed in affidavit form. It is now in the process of having the persons who gave the statements review them and swear to them. Where it appears that an identifiable law enforcement officer has committed a crime, the person interviewed is asked to turn the data over to governmental authorities such as the FBI or the Prosecutor. All the material is being reviewed, studied and analyzed to determine what remedies are available.

In general, the statements suggest that there are four forms of conduct on the part of law enforcement personnel which have aroused the ghetto community, namely: (1) personal indignities inflicted upon Negroes, (2) physical violence inflicted

upon Negroes, (3) indiscriminate shooting and (4) deliberate destruction of Negro property.

B. Personal Indignities: Twenty-one statements described personal indignities inflicted upon Negroes by law enforcement people. They did not include those situations where the personal indignities were accompanied by violence against the person. These indignities included use of unprintable names when referring to or addressing Negroes, abusive language, threats of killing or bodily injury, abusive searching of the person, false arrests on trumped up charges, stripping a young boy and sending him out into the streets naked, and minor physical mistreatment which did not cause substantial injury. The statements attributed such actions to the following agencies:

Newark Police alone	11
State Police alone	7
National Guard alone	2
State Police and National Guard	1

C. Physical Violence: The physical violence inflicted upon Negroes is described in forty-five statements, each given by a person who was a victim of such violence or given by a person who saw such violence being committed.

The statements attributed such violence to the following agencies:

Newark Police alone	29
State Police alone	2
National Guard alone	1
State Police and Nat'l Guard	1
State Police & Newark Police	6
Newark Police and Nat'l Guard	2
Unspecified	4

The violence consisted of hitting victims with rifle butts, fists, or black-jacks, shooting stamping or beating victims. It was committed against men, women and children. The actions took place on the street, in patrol cars and at the station house.

D. Indiscriminate Shooting: There are 86 statements which describe indiscriminate shooting by law enforcement personnel. It should be noted that many of these statements describe the same event or series of events. It should also be noted that there are not included in these statements those which involved deliberate shooting which was intended to destroy Negro property.

The indiscriminate shooting included random shooting in the air, shooting at houses and into doors and windows, spraying housing projects with bullets, shooting down streets and at cars, shooting at or around groups of people, including children at play.

Such conduct was attributed to the following agencies by the following number of statements:

Newark Police alone	21
State Police alone	32
Nat'l Guard alone	8
State Police & Newark Police	2
State Police and Nat'l Guard	13
Newark Police & Nat'l Guard;	0
Unspecified	10

Among the injuries and deaths caused by such shooting were the following: James Sneed was shot in the side while fixing his car. Carl Green, a child, was shot in his right eye as he entered his home. His sight is gone in that eye. Ricardo Alicia was shot in his neck and shoulder while in the home of a friend. Rebecca Brown was

killed in her apartment. An unknown man carrying a six-pack of beer was shot. Jasper Harley was shot in the thigh. An unidentified man was shot while telephoning in a telephone booth. Emerson Moss' 10 year old son was shot and killed while riding in the back seat of his father's car. A mother of ten children was shot and killed in her apartment. One man was shot in the arm and another in the stomach when the Newark Police fired at a peaceful group of people standing with Father Drasel, Rector of Newark's House of Prayer. Cornelius Murray, Jr., was shot and killed as he tried to get to his car. Mrs. Abraham was shot and killed as she searched for her son on the street. Isaac Harrison was fatally shot and his son Virgil wounded as they walked along the street. All of the above shooting was done by law enforcement personnel.

E. Destruction of Negro Property: Eighty-four statements describe the deliberate destruction of Negro property. Most of these (78) involved the destruction of business properties, which were identifiable because the words "Soul" or "Soul Brother" or "Soul Sister" had been written on the windows. Five incidents involved damage to apartments and their contents and two involved thefts of property.

Most of the destruction was effected by shooting into store windows or by smashing the windows with rifle butts. There are statements which describe jeeps or police cars slowly driving along a street and systematically shooting each store identified as a Negro store. In some cases, areas where no stores, white owned or Negro owned, had been injured, the windows of all Negro stores were smashed by law enforcement personnel.

The types of businesses subjected to this treatment were a record shop, a funeral parlor, luncheonettes, restaurants, bars and grills, TV and appliance stores, furniture stores, a photography shop, beauty parlors, a pet shop, a pool room, a laundromat, a dry cleaning store, a grocery a tailor shop and a general contractor's office.

The agencies to whom these actions were attributed were the following:

Newark Police alone	3
State Police alone	37
National Guard alone	7
State Police & Newark Police	6
State Police & Nat'l Guard	4
Newark Police & Nat'l Guard	2
State & Newark Police & Nat'l Guard	2
Unspecified	23